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Railroad Rolling Stock and Operations
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1. The five year plan running from 1946 to 1950 envisaged ambitious accomplishments. The laying of 7,230 kilometers of track was planned which would raise the total length of track to 123,000 kilometers. The construction of 7,585 steam locomotives and 472,000 freight cars was also scheduled. The transport plans for 1950 called for 771 million tons of freight and actually was surpassed, as a total of 795 million tons were transported. This made a total of 600 billion ton kilometers. The average daily loading of freight cars for 1950 was planned as 115,000 cars and this was exceeded with a daily average of 118,000 cars.
2. I don't know of any trend towards Diesel or steam locomotives for the railroads, but there is a large number of both types of locomotives. In the southern areas where there is a shortage of water and coal there is a larger number of Diesel locomotives. It is my opinion that there will be more electrification of the railroad lines. The reasons therefor are mainly in the convenience of operation and an increased margin of profit. The increased construction of electric power stations substantiate this belief.
3. I'm not certain which areas have electrified railroads at this time, but I believe that there are such lines in Mineralnye Vody, Grozny, Moscow and Leningrad. I know that there is such a line in Baku. There is an electric railroad from Mineralnye Vody to Moscow, but I am uncertain how far out of the cities these electrified lines extend. The electric railroad from Baku runs to Surakhany Sabunahiy. There is also a separate line for steam locomotives extending into Baku.
4. Generally the electric locomotives are used in transporting both freight and passenger trains. In the passenger trains, however, there are generally two locomotives, one pulling and one pushing, whereas in the freight trains they have only one locomotive pulling the train.
5. The general condition of passenger-type rolling stock is poor. There are a lot of two-axle cars available for short runs and a limited number of four-axle cars for the longer distances. Most of the passenger cars are old types and there are

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only a very few comfortable cars. Passenger trains are generally twelve to fourteen cars in length and one of these cars, generally number six, is a so-called comfortable car. An increased fare is levied on people riding in this car. Often car number seven is also a comfortable car, but this car is reserved for military officers and it is very difficult to buy a ticket for it. If you have the money for the extra fare on car number six you can generally get a seat in that car.

6. Most of the passenger cars are of a type known as the platskartnyy vagon or a reserved seat car literally. The seats on this type of car are not reserved, however. This type of car is fitted out with bench-like seats which are arranged in various ways. The cars are divided into two or more sections and there are a varying number of seats in the individual compartments. The four-axle comfortable cars are about thirteen meters long and have eight sections which seat eight to ten people per section. The benches may be ticketed as seats for two or three people or the places may be sold as sleeping benches. In a four-axle car with three compartments there are about forty sleeping accommodations. Two-axle cars generally do not have any sections or divisions.
7. The bearings frequently burn out on these platskartnyy-type cars and are the chief cause for them being put out of operation.
8. There is another type of car which is used for transporting prisoners and it is called an arrestanskiy vagon. There is usually at least one of these cars on every train. As far as I know it is not used for transporting any one type of prisoner.
9. Since the end of World War II a two-year prison sentence has been established for unauthorized riding of a freight train.
10. The condition of the rolling stock for hauling cargo is better than the passenger equipment and considerable effort is being made to further improve the quality and quantity of the former. The majority of the freight cars used to be of the two-axle type, but due to the concentration of production on the four-axle type, the latter are probably more numerous than the former. The basic types of rolling stock for transporting cargo are as follows:

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Freight car (vagon) - This is a closed freight car; the two-axle type is usually capable of hauling 16 to 20 tons of cargo and the four-axle type can haul 50 tons. This type of car is sometimes used as a cattle car, and in such cases air holes are opened in the car for ventilation.

Flat car (platform) - This is an open flat car; the two-axle types can carry 16 to 20 tons and the four-axle type carries 50 tons. This type is also used as a cattle car and in such cases slats and a roof are constructed for protecting the livestock.

Gondola (gondola) - This is an open freight car which is used in the transporting of cargo such as coal. This type car has four axles and can carry 50 to 60 tons.

Tank cars (tsistern) This is used for transporting petroleum products and liquid fuels and has either two or four axles, capable of carrying twenty or forty tons respectively.

Refrigerator car - I think that this car is both the two and four-axle type, capable (kholodilnik) of carrying 20, 40, and 50 tons.

11. With regard to the organization of the trains, I am not familiar with any rules governing the physical arrangement of cars. I do know that generally the freight cars carrying the more valuable and fragile cars are placed in the middle of the trains where the swaying is less pronounced than on the ends of the train. This type of cargo would include instruments, machinery and engines. Passenger cars are generally hauled in separate trains and are not included in freight trains. There is another general practice of a similar nature established for tank cars. The tank cars are usually hauled in separate trains and are not mingled with other types of freight cars. There are usually about fifty cars per train.
12. The majority of all types of rolling stock have air brakes (kasantsev) and also a Westinghouse brake. I heard that the Westinghouse brake was unreliable as it didn't brake steadily and tended to damage the wheels. I haven't seen this type of brake since the end of World War II. I saw some mechanical brakes on small cars, but all of the larger freight cars are equipped with airbrakes.
13. There are frequent breakdowns in the operation of the trains in the USSR. This is principally due to the extremely heavy loads that the trains are obliged to haul. The heavy tonnage causes a rapid deterioration of rolling stock and track with resultant disruptions of service. The most frequent disruptions in operations occur as a result of cars leaving the tracks due to the uneven condition of the roadbeds. In the regions north of Saratov another major cause of accidents is the heavy snowfalls received in those regions. two major railroad accidents which occurred and were then suppressed from the news. In the Summer or Spring of 1950 an accident happened near Pushkino (formerly

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Urbakh) when a train of cars parted from the locomotive near the top of a hill. The freight cars ran away and leaped the track in a railroad station. All of the freight and the 10 or 15 cars involved were a total loss. In the winter of 1949-1950 there was an unusually heavy snowfall in the area around Astrakhan. A passenger train was stranded in the snow drifts and a loss of 100 lives occurred. No mention of this disaster was ever printed in the newspapers.

14. [redacted] in the Soviet Zone of Germany I saw no Soviet rolling stock in that area, nor have I ever seen any German rolling stock in the USSR. I suspected that a German plant near Leipzig was producing rolling stock for the Soviets, but I am not certain. As far as I know all Soviet trains are unloaded at the Soviet border and the cargo reloaded on trains of European gauge. [redacted]

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15. The only plants which I know to be engaged in the production of rolling stock for the railroads are the Leningrad Railroad Car Building Plant i/n Egorov and the Bryansk Car Building Plant. I know nothing about the volumes of production of these plants.

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